

“The Political Education of Maggie Lauterer” – song lyrics
 “Amazing Grace,” John Newton, 18th century

SUGGESTED BRAINSTORMING QUESTION:
 HOW MANY WOMEN RULERS THROUGHOUT HISTORY CAN YOU NAME,
 AND WHAT WAS THEIR IMPACT?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR “THE POLITICAL EDUCATION OF MAGGIE LAUTERER”
 (Viewing time 87 minutes)

INSIGHT = Discussions on *Exploring Fundamental Concepts* and *Investigating Parallel Themes* as listed below

CONTRIBUTING INFORMATION = Why is it necessary for the *Fundamental Concepts* and *Parallel Themes* to be considered when it is a female candidate, but not when it is a male candidate?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION = Fundraising strategies in general, and the unpredictability of other women’s loyalty and support

EXPLORING FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS

A WOMAN IN POLITICS Point of view of (too many) voters	A WOMAN IN POLITICS Female candidate’s point of view
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INVESTIGATING PARALLEL THEMES

1. Is a woman strong enough physically and mentally to fulfill the duties required? Will she need to take off extra time from her duties due to women’s health issues? What will happen if she becomes pregnant during her time in office?	1. How will being a politician impact my husband and children? What must I sacrifice? What must they sacrifice? What will be the long term effects on them?
2. Will a woman be taken seriously when it is time for tough negotiating?	2. Will I be taken seriously by the voters and by my male counterparts when I am in office?

3. Will a woman be able to gain the respect of her male counterparts, and if she is good looking, will she be looked on as a sex object?	3. Will I have the emotional stamina to face strong, negative campaigning? Can I be equally negative?
4. Is the woman intelligent and well educated enough to handle the legal and economic issues related to the office?	4. How will I handle being verbally attacked by my more experienced male counterparts when I seem to be standing alone on a particular issue? Will I become intimidated and back down?

VOCABULARY ITEMS

THE YEAR I RAN FOR CONGRESS – viewing time 24 minutes

Section 1 introduces a woman candidate who is a Democrat from North Carolina. She is the first woman from her district to run for a congressional seat. She is married with a family and has been a television personality before entering politics.

(There is no introduction to the second section. The first ends after Maggie has visited the country home of a woman whose family has recently been murdered. Maggie sings “Amazing Grace” for the second time and tells of the murder of her own father. She is then seen walking back to her car.)

Blank out:	lose concentration, to not be able to recognize what you are doing
Christian Coalition:	fundamentalist Christians who are very conservative and politically active
Daisy May:	cartoon character who lives in the mountains, is poor and does not wear shoes; refers to someone who lives a very simple life
Dick and Jane:	characters in the primary readers that most Americans over the age of 40 used as reading texts during their earliest grades
Dulcimer:	a stringed instrument, sometimes called a zither
Fall apart:	lose control of what one is doing
Out of left field:	baseball term meaning something unexpected happening
Outsider:	someone who is not a part of a particular group
Political whore:	(vulgar) someone who will support any candidate who somehow benefits him/her
Roll with the punches	not to get too upset by whatever happens
Tickled to death:	very happy about something
Whatever floats your boat:	whatever makes you happy
White picket fence:	part of the American dream, a home with a yard and a white picket fence (surrounding the house and yard), 2-car garage, and a “couple of kids”

Win by formula: campaign by exactly following the strategies that have proven successful over time, to not deviate or show any individuality/creativity in campaigning

SECTION 2 – viewing time 37 minutes

This section focuses on fundraising strategies and the necessity for Maggie to incorporate negativity in her campaign as she meets her opponent for a debate.

Big Apple:	a label used for New York City
Drive time:	the hours when most people are listening to their radios; time for reaching the largest audience
Gloves come off:	a change from being polite and considerate to doing whatever is necessary to win without any major concern for one's reputation
Going for the jugular:	relating to the neck and throat, meaning to stop one's opponent in any way possible
Knock it out of the park:	baseball term meaning to get a "home run;" to win by a very large margin
Laid back:	doesn't let anything bother one, very calm
Nail someone down:	force someone to say exactly what is meant, or to tell what one's intentions are
Perk:	a benefit given to an employee or subordinate
Pit stop:	car racing term meaning a time to take a break from whatever one is doing in order to get relieved, refreshed and ready to go back to work
Political spin:	attempts to shape public perception for political gain
Rest on (one's) laurels	from the Greeks who were given laurel leaf wreaths to wear on their heads upon winning a tournament; meaning to stop being active and use one's past record, or achievements, without any significant effort
Shot in the arm:	referring to an energy surge that comes from being given drugs; a rush of adrenaline brought about by something dynamic happening to someone that causes that person to become excited and active; something that energizes a person or organization
Underdog:	person who is not expected to win
Watershed event:	an occasion or event that changes the direction of someone's, or something's, future

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7th - DAY BEFORE ELECTION DAY – viewing time 26 minutes

The previous section ends with Maggie at the podium and her campaign manager saying, "No one needs to tell her it's 'do or die' right now."

(It might be interesting for your viewers to pause at this point in the film and discuss the possible meaning of “do or die” and whether or not Maggie will win the election.)

This final section focuses on the last minute efforts used to gather more votes, including a visit to her campaign from Vice President Al Gore. Maggie loses the election due to a Republican sweep throughout the country.

Cliff-hanger:	theatrical expression meaning a high point in the play when the result of the conflict can go in either of two directions; an exciting point with an unknown outcome
Concession speech:	speech given to the public by the candidate who has lost the election
Get queasy:	a feeling in the stomach as though one is going to be sick and vomit; metaphor for being nervous
Rattle:	to confuse
Stump for:	to help a candidate. Example: a popular politician visits the candidate’s rally in the hope that he/she will influence the audience to vote for the candidate; to campaign for someone or something
Upset:	when the candidate who is not expected to win, does win by a large majority
Wipeout across the country:	all the candidates of a certain party win the vast majority of political races nearly everywhere in the nation; often called a landslide

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Breaking into groups by gender, have students analyze Maggie’s campaign and list suggestions as to how it could have been improved to win more votes. Compare and contrast lists to determine if they think her campaign was winnable at any point, then compare again to see if there is a gender bias in the lists and discuss that as a secondary issue.

SONG LYRICS

AMAZING GRACE

Amazing grace!
How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

‘Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
‘Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess with in the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

When we’ve been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when we’ve first begun.